

English 3310, section 11531: Children's Literature  
Fall 2010: MWF 9-9:50 a.m., Irby 304



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Office Hours: MWF 10-11 a.m. and by appointment

### Course description

This class will be conducted as a survey of children's literature primarily in the English tradition. We will examine various genres of children's literature, including prose, picture books, poetry, and films.

The goals of this course are to:

- improve our grasp of the complexities of children's literature by engaging in literary and cultural criticism as we read and analyze the texts selected
- consider how our chosen texts represent the child and childhood and how literature for children reflects the social or cultural contexts in which it was written
- study early specimens of literature for children in order to better understand the conventions, values, and anxieties that have shaped children's literature in the past and continue to inform contemporary texts
- discuss issues of text selection for use in the elementary classroom, focusing primarily on the literature itself and its content rather than pedagogical methods. Students must keep in mind that this course, as an English rather than an Education course, is designed to benefit future teachers of children's literature by offering training primarily in literary analysis.

## Required texts and materials

- Goodnight Moon, Margaret Wise Brown
- Dr. Seuss's ABC, Theodore Geisel
- City by Numbers, Stephen Johnson
- Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!, Mo Willems
- Snowy Day, Ezra Jack Keats
- Chato's Kitchen, Gary Soto
- A Pocketful of Poems, Nikki Grimes
- The Mysteries of Harris Burdick, Chris Van Allsburg
- The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales, Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith
- Little House on the Prairie, Laura Ingalls Wilder
- Stuart Little, E.B. White
- James and the Giant Peach, Roald Dahl
- What Jamie Saw, Carolyn Coman
- Diary of a Wimpy Kid, Jeff Kinney
- Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear, Lensey Namioka
- Literature for Children: A Short Introduction, David L. Russell

Our required reading for the course also includes online texts of which you will not have to purchase hard copies. I will post files of the texts on myUCA for you to access.

You are also required to have:

- a UCA e-mail account that you check *daily*
- opinions and insights that you develop and voice in class. The success of this course depends in large part on its members' willingness to seriously and actively engage the material and participate in discussions.

## Policies

Scholastic Dishonesty Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty. The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

Other University Policies. Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the policies outlined in the UCA Student Handbook, particularly those pertaining to sexual harassment and academics.

Authorized Absences. Students are required to come to class on time and to complete all assignments. Daily attendance will be taken via sign-in sheet. You are responsible for providing evidence and/or appropriate documentation to substantiate "authorized absences." Excused absences can include illness requiring a doctor's visit, the serious illness of an immediate family

member or illness of a dependent, the death of a relative, etc. Please direct any questions concerning what constitutes an excused absence to me. If you know in advance that you will miss a class, you are responsible for informing me. You are allowed three unexcused absences. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in the deduction of two percentage points from your final grade. Please use your three absences wisely—they are not intended for those days when you feel like sleeping in, but rather for days when you cannot come to class but your absence is not excused. Nine or more absences, excused or otherwise, provide grounds for the student to be dropped from the course.

Keep in mind that absences due to illnesses that do not necessitate a doctor's visit (unless chronic, as documented by a doctor) or trips out of town for weddings or family vacations are not excused absences. Please also try to avoid scheduling routine medical check-ups, such as dental cleanings or yearly physicals, during class time—I will not excuse these absences.

Students who arrive to class after half of the class period (calculated by the duration of the class period in minutes) or more has passed will be counted absent and will not be allowed to sign the sign-in attendance sheet. Chronic tardiness may be penalized by counting each third tardy as an unexcused absence.

If you are absent on the day of an exam, you are responsible for contacting me as soon as possible to schedule the make-up exam. If your absence is excusable, you are responsible for providing documentation to substantiate this at the time of the make-up exam. Five late points will be deducted from the exam grade if the absence is not excused (i.e., you overslept). Five late points may also be deducted if you do not contact me in a timely manner to schedule the make-up exam, whether your absence is excused or not.

Students who miss class are responsible for obtaining information regarding missed class notes, material, and assignments. It is my policy to email students information regarding missed class notes only for excused absences and only when the student has sent a request via email specifying student name, course number and section, and class date(s) missed. I strongly recommend that students also talk with their classmates about what they have missed.

Classroom Behavior. Disruptive classroom behavior is defined as anything that would interfere with an instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program. *Please remember specifically* that you should silence or turn off all cell phones before class, and that all individuals and the opinions they express in class are to be treated with respect during class discussions.

Paper Format. Unless otherwise specified, *all* homework and paper assignments should be typed (letter-quality printing required) in 12-point Times New Roman font with one-inch margins and double-spaced on white bond paper, according to MLA guidelines. Documentation must be provided in MLA format.

Late Papers. Papers that are turned in late without an excused absence/absences are subject to a deduction of 3 grade points per day that they are late.

Appropriate Attribution. Any assignment that fails to include clear and appropriate attribution of sources will receive a grade of zero ("0").

Grades. Grades are not negotiable. Your final course grade will be based on your work in the course. If you are concerned about a grade, see me during office hours or make an appointment to meet with me.

Acknowledging Assistance. All drafts and supporting documents for papers and presentations must be your writing—that is, your own ideas and your own words. If you work with a tutor or get feedback on your work from a classmate or friend, plan on discussing your writing, but let the other person know that all writing must be your own. Any paper that shows evidence of assistance and fails to acknowledge that assistance will be considered a case of scholastic dishonesty and reported as such.

Handouts. The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. "Handouts" are all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to exams, quizzes, syllabi, in-class materials, sample papers, and peer critique sheets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy handouts unless I expressly grant permission.

E-mail, Phone, and Fax. I will not discuss grades on e-mail or over the phone and, unless otherwise specified, I will not accept assignments attached to e-mail messages. The English department will not accept papers or excuses for absences faxed to me.

### Students Needing Support Service

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Services, 450-3613.

### The University Writing Center

The UCA Writing Center, located in Thompson 109, offers students one-on-one tutoring and online assistance with their writing. For more information, see the web site: [www.uca.edu/writingcenter](http://www.uca.edu/writingcenter).

### Course Requirements and Grade Determination:

No extra credit will be offered in the class. Grades—including final averages—will not be rounded up, except in the case of 59.5/ 69.5/ 79.5/89.5.

Final grade values:

A	90-100	B	80-89
C	70-79	D	60-69
F	59 and below		

Throughout the semester, you will write one 3-page response paper and one 5-6-page final paper, give one formal in-class presentation, and take three exams. *All papers must be typed and submitted as a hard copy unless I instruct you otherwise.* More detailed descriptions of the papers will be given in class as the semester progresses. The exams will be objective, covering the

material that we have discussed in class. They will include fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, identification, and short-paragraph-answer questions.

Exam #1	15%
Response paper (3-page essay responding to an assigned question)	15%
Exam #2	15%
Presentation (given in class on an author from the selection sheet)	15%
Final exam	20%
Final paper	20%

### Schedule of Reading, Assignments, and Paper Due Dates

This schedule is subject to change at the professor's discretion. The readings and assignments listed under each date are those that you will be expected to have completed *by that date*.

Friday, August 27: Introduction to course.

Monday, August 30: "Sun, Moon, and Talia" by Giambattista Basile; "Sleeping Beauty" by Charles Perrault; "Beauty and the Beast" by Jeanne-Marie le Prince de Beaumont (file available on myUCA).

Wednesday, September 1: "The Story of Grandmother"; "Little Red Cap" by Johann and Wilhelm Grimm (file available on myUCA).

Friday, September 3: The New England Primer (pdf file available on myUCA); Russell pp. 6-12.

Monday, September 6: Labor Day; no class.

Wednesday, September 8: excerpt from The History of Sanford and Merton by Thomas Day (file available on myUCA). (discuss presentation assignment; sign up for authors)

Friday, September 10: Speaking Likenesses by Christina Rossetti (pdf file available on myUCA).

Monday, September 13: Dr. Seuss's ABC, Theodore Geisel; Russell pp. 122-24.

Wednesday, September 15: City by Numbers, Stephen Johnson; Russell pp. 124-26.

Friday, September 17: Introduction to picture books. Russell pp. 134-51.

Monday, September 20: Goodnight Moon, Margaret Wise Brown. (begin presentations)

Wednesday, September 22: Snowy Day, Ezra Jack Keats.

Friday, September 24: Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!, Mo Willems.

Monday, September 27: The Mysteries of Harris Burdick, Chris Van Allsburg.

Wednesday, September 29: Exam #1.

Friday, October 1: Chato's Kitchen, Gary Soto; Russell pp. 84-93.

Monday, October 4: Chato's Kitchen, continued; "Authentic Enough" by Susan Guevara (pdf file available on myUCA).

Wednesday, October 6: A Pocketful of Poems, Nikki Grimes; Russell pp. 165-76.

Friday, October 8: The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales, Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith.

Monday, October 11: The Stinky Cheese Man, continued.

Wednesday, October 13: Little House on the Prairie, Laura Ingalls Wilder chs. 1-8; Russell pp. 245-50.

Friday, October 15: Little House on the Prairie chs. 9-17.

Monday, October 18: Little House on the Prairie chs. 18-end of novel.

Wednesday, October 20: Stuart Little, chs. 1-9.

Friday, October 22: Fall break; no class.

Monday, October 25: Stuart Little, chs. 10-15; "Adapting Children's Literature" by Deborah Cartmell (available on myUCA). Response paper due.

Wednesday, October 27: Stuart Little film.

Friday, October 29: Stuart Little film, continued.

Monday, November 1: Exam #2.

Wednesday, November 3: excerpt from Revolting Rhymes by Roald Dahl (file available on myUCA); James and the Giant Peach, chs. 1-13.

Friday, November 5: James and the Giant Peach, chs. 14-27.

Monday, November 8: James and the Giant Peach, chs. 28-end of novel; begin James and the Giant Peach film.

Wednesday, November 10: James and the Giant Peach film, continued.

Friday, November 12: What Jamie Saw, Carolyn Coman chs.; Russell pp. 93-97.

Monday, November 15: What Jamie Saw, Carolyn Coman chs.

Wednesday, November 17: What Jamie Saw, Carolyn Coman chs.

Friday, November 19: Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear, Lensey Namioka chs. 1-4.

Monday, November 22: Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear, Lensey Namioka chs. 5-end of novel.

Wednesday, November 24: Thanksgiving break; no class.

Friday, November 26: Thanksgiving break; no class.

Monday, November 29: Diary of a Wimpy Kid pp. 1-75.

Wednesday, December 1: Diary of a Wimpy Kid pp. 76-150.

Friday, December 3: Diary of a Wimpy Kid pp. 151-end of novel.

Monday, December 6: Diary of a Wimpy Kid film.

Wednesday, December 8: Diary of Wimpy Kid film, continued. Final paper due.

Monday, December 13: final exam, 2-4 p.m.